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Feb. 6. 1687

This may be
Printed,

Sunderland, P.

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B. J. 1. 762

A
TRUE and PERFECT
NARRATIVE

OF THE
Strange and Unexpected Finding the
Crucifix & Gold Chain

OF
That Pious Prince, St. Edward
The King and Confessor,

Which was found after 620 Years Interment :

AND
Presented to His Most Sacred Ma-
jesty, King JAMES the Second.

By Charles Taylour, Gent. *This is only a faint name*

LONDON,

Printed by J. B. and are to be Sold by Randal Taylor, near
Stationers Hall, 1688.

*for Henry
Koop, the
same who
published the
manuscript
manuscript
from the*

quotes himself in pag. 14.

NARRATIVE

OF THE
STRANGE AND UNEXPECTED FINDING OF
THE

OF
THE
THE KING'S PRINCE OF WALES
OF



WHICH WAS FOUND AFTER 630 YEARS' INTERMENT
AND

PRESENTED TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE KING OF THE ROMANS

By Charles Taylor, Esq.

LONDON:
Printed by J. B. and are to be sold by
Messrs. J. B. and are to be sold by

To the Kings Most Excellent
Majesty.

Dread Sir,

NExt to my Fathers Serving your
Most Sacred Majesties Royal
Father of Glorious Memory,
in the quality of Cornet of Horse in
Sr William Courtneys Regiment,
in all his Wars against his Enemies,
and breeding up his Children in
Principles of Unshaken Loyalty. I
cannot but esteem it a great part of
my good Fortune to have been made
the happy Instrument of preserving so
Holy and Sacred a Treasure, as the
Crucifix and Gold-Chain of St.
Edward the Confessor seem to be :
And the having an Opportunity of lay-
ing

ing them at your Majesties feet. And
whereas your Majesty was then pleased
to accept the same with some kind of
satisfaction, so I humbly beseech your
most Sacred Majesty to pardon this
presumption of giving your Majesty
the trouble of a further account of
that Action, then at that present I could
recollect or call to mind, and that the
Memory thereof may not be lost to Poste-
rity; which is the humble request of,

Your Majesties

Most Faithfull,

Obedient, and

Loyal Subject,

and Servant,

Charles Taylour.

A
TRUE and PERFECT
NARRATIVE

Of the Strange and Unexpected
finding the *Crucifix and Gold-Chain*
of *St. Edward* the King and Con-
fessor, &c.

SO many and so various have been the
Relations and Reports, concerning the
finding and disposing of the *Crucifix and*
Gold-Chain of *St. Edward* the King
and Confessor, and those so fabulous and
uncertain withall ; That in Honour to Truth,
to disabuse the misinform'd World, and to
satisfy the curiosity as well as importunity
of my Friends, I think my self under an
Obligation

Obligation to set forth this plain Narrative of the matter of Fact, from whom all others (tho' never so Erroenous) pretend to have it. In order thereunto (to avoid confusion, prolixity, and what is worse, Tedious Preambles, and digressions) I shall take this short Method to perform it.

In the first place, I shall give an account of some things previous (or what went before) in order to the discovery.

Secondly, the description of the place it self from whence these things were taken.

Thirdly, the manner of finding and securing the same, the disposing thereof, and presenting them to his present Majesty.

Fourthly, an Exact description of the said **Crucifix** and **Chain** with other dependencies thereon.

And lastly, Some material Remarks, and Historical Observations on the whole. For the first, you are to understand that behind the High-Altar or back of the Communion-Table, in the *Abby Church* of **St. Peters-Westminster** there are two doors, one on the right and

and the other on the left hand, and both leading into a small Chappel, Dedicated to St. **Edward the King and Confessor**, and till this day known by that name, tho' sometimes (by reason many Kings and Queens of this Realm have been Interr'd therein) call'd *the Chappel of the Kings*. Into this Chappel and thorough one of those doors it is that when the Solemnity of our Kings and Queens *Inaugurations or Coronations* are perform'd in this Church, that they withdraw after the Unction, Benediction, and other Ceremonies are passed at the High-Altar, where they not only repose themselves for a time, but are dismantled of their former Princely Robes and Accoutrements, to be re-invested with more Noble, more Stately, and those of greater Grandeur and Magnificence : *The Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, the Lord High-Chamberlain of England, and the Dean of Westminster* officiating ; on which occasion several Boards, Scaffolding, Traverses, Tables, and other cumbersome materials are there set up, covered and adorned with costly Tapestry and other rich furniture ;

All which (as heretofore) was likewise performed at the Solemn and Happy Coronation of our Royal Sovereign his present Majesty, *King James the Second*, and his most excellent Consort our Gracious *Queen Mary*, whom God grant long and happily to Reign here, and Eternally in Glory hereafter.

In the midst of the aforesaid **Chappel** of **St. Edward** there is a very lofty and Noble Tomb still remaining, built after the manner of a Shrine, and for which intent it was erected by King *Henry the Third*. The Base (placed on a very curious floor, inlaid with all sorts of fine coloured Agats and Marbles) raises it self about six or Seven foot from the Pavement, supported at each corner by twisted or Serpentine Pillars, and the whole Composure of *Mosaick Work*. (Tho' of late much injured and defaced by picking out the coloured Glass and Stones) On the North and South-side hereof are three Niches or Arches, with one at the East-end, so ordered and contrived that the Sick and Infirm might here repose without offence

offence or injury to each other : On this, as a pedestal, (for it is solid throughout) is a more Sumptuous *Cabinet or Repository* made of Wainscot hollow within, (and formerly covered with plates of Gold and Silver without) but at present nothing remains but the *Wooden-frame or Casket* only. Within this Hollow place or Caverne, then it was that I have often observed (by the help of a Ladder) something resembling a *Coffin* made of sound, firm, and strong Wood, and bound about with bands of Iron, and during the Eighteen years I have belonged to the Quire of this Church, it was a common Tradition among us that therein were deposited the Body or Remains of Holy **King Edward the Confessor**.

Now it happen'd not long after the Coronation of their Present Majesties, that the aforesaid *Coffin or Chest* was found to be broke, and an hole made upon the upper Lid thereof, over against the Right Breast, about six Inches long and four broad, some esteeming it an Accident, (thro' the Carelessness and Neglect of the Work-

men in removing the Scaffolds) others thought it done out of Design; but be it the one or the other, thus it continued for almost seven Weeks, and often viewed by divers of the Church before it was my good Fortune to go thither; when (on *St. Barnaby's Day*, In the Year of our Lords Incarnation *One Thousand Six Hundred Eighty and Five*) I met with two Friends, (between Eleven and Twelve of the Clock after Morning Service) who told me they were going to see the Tombs, so I went along with them, Informing them that there was a Report that the *Coffin* of **St. Edward the King and Confessor** was broke; and coming to the place, I was desirous to be satisfied of the Truth thereof: In order thereunto, I fetched a Ladder, lookt upon the *Coffin*, and found all things answerable to the Report; And putting my hand into the hole, and turning the Bones (which I felt there) I drew from underneath the Shoulder-Bones a **Crucifix** richly adorned and enamelled, and a **Gold Chain** of four and twenty Inches long, unto which it was affixed, the which I immediately shew'd

to my two Friends, they being as much surprized and equally admired the same as my self. But I was afraid to take them away with me, 'till such time I had acquainted the *Dean*, as the *Governour* and Chief *Director* of our Church ; And thereupon I put them into the *Coffin* again, with a full Resolution to inform him. But the *Dean* not being to be spoke with at that time, and fearing this *Holy Treasure* might be taken thence by some other Persons, and so concealed by converting it to their own use, I went (about two or three hours after) to one of the *Quire*, and acquainted him with what I had found, who immediately accompanied me back to the *Monument*, and from whence I again drew the aforesaid *Crucifix* and *Chain* and shew'd them him who beheld them with admiration; presently advising me to keep them 'till I should gain an opportunity to shew them to the *Bishop of Rochester* our *Dean* ; so I kept them for the space of three Weeks and five days, as having no opportunity in all that time to speak with him, by reason of his
uncertain

uncertain residence, being often in the Country, and when in Town so taken up with the affairs of *Parliament* that I was not willing to disturb him; In the mean time, hearing that his Grace *John* (late Lord Arch Bishop of York, and my ever honoured good Lord) was come to Town, I went to pay my Duty and Respects to him and shew'd him the *Crucifix and Chain*, who looked upon them as *great pieces of Antiquity*, (for so he was pleased to call them) shewing them with admiration to the rest of his Family, and ordered me to wait upon him the next Morning, for he designed that I should go along with him to *Lambeth house*, that his Grace of *Canterbury* might have a sight thereof: Accordingly my Lord Arch-Bishop of York carried me thither, and when I had produced them, and his Grace had well viewed and perused them, he express'd the like conceptions of them as my Lord of York had done before, *Viz.* That the whole was a very *great piece of Antiquity*. After this (having these things so long by me) I procured an able Master

O'Brien

Saucroft

Master in Drawing and Limning, to take an exact draught thereof, according to the full dimensions with the Reverse, Figures, and other adornments, the which I have now by me. About the same time that Industrious and Judicious Antiquary Sir *William Dugdale*, *Late Garter Principal King at Arms*, was pleased to give me a visit, and told me how his Grace the *Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury* had inform'd him of a great Rarity I had in my possession, and named it, desiring moreover that he might have a sight thereof, with whose request I willingly complied, telling me likewise that he would make some remarks thereon.

On the *Sixth day of July* following, My *Lord Bishop of Rochester*, and *Dean of Westminster*, dining at his Grace the *Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's*; His Grace was pleased to declare to his *Lordship* what he had seen, concerning these Things, and to inform him how they were still in my Possession, so that upon his *Lordship's* return to the *Abby* that afternoon about four of the Clock, I was sent for,

for, who immediately took me along with him to *Whitehall*, that I might present this *Sacred Treasure* to the *King*; and being no sooner introduced into his Majesties Closet, (where I had the Honour to Kiss his Royal Hand) but upon my knees I delivered them with my own hands to him, which his Most Sacred Majesty was pleased to accept with much Satisfaction, and having given him a further account how the remains of the body of that Holy King was, and opened the *Croß* in his presence, I withdrew, leaving them safe as being now in his Royal possession.

At the time, when I took out of the Coffin the aforesaid *Croß and Chain*, I drew the Head to the hole, and view'd it, being very sound and firm, with the upper and nether Jaws whole and full of Teeth, with a list of Gold above an Inch broad in the nature of a Coronet, surrounding the Temples: There was also in the Coffin white-Linnen, and Gold-colour'd flowr'd-silk, that look't indifferent fresh, but the least stress
put

put thereto shew'd it was well nigh perisht; There were all his Bones, and much dust likewise, all which I left as I found, taking only thence along with me the *Crucifix* and *Gold-Chain*. His Majesty was pleased soon after this discovery, to send to the *Abby*, to take care that no damage were done to the Coffin, and ordered it to be inclosed in a new one, of an Extraordinary strength and goodness, each planck being two Inches thick, and joyn'd together with large Iron wedges, where it now remains as a Testimony of his Pious Care that no abuse might be offered to those Sacred *Ashes*.

To set forth these Things in their proper colours, and to describe the same, so that the Eye of the mind may be brought down to have a just apprehension of them, I will not, with my weak Judgment, pretend to undertake: Yet having them so long in my possession, and viewing them so often with delight, I will endeavour what I can to give you the description of them. For the *Chain*, it was four and twenty Inches long, complet, all of

pure Gold, the Links oblong, and Curiously
 Wrought: The upper part whereof (to lye
 in the Nape of the Neck) was joyned toge-
 ther by a Docket, Composed of a large round
 Nodd of Gold, Massy, and in Circumference
 as big as a Mild-shilling, and half an Inch
 thick: Round this went a Wyer, and on the
 Wyer about half a dozen little Brads, hanging
 loose, and running too and again, on the same,
 all of pure Gold, and finely wrought. On
 each side of the Lockett were set two large
 square red Stones (supposed to be Rubies.)
 From each side of this Lockett, fixed to two
 Rings of Gold, the Chain descends, and
 meeting below, passes thro a square piece
 of Gold of a convenient bigness, made hol-
 low for the same purpose; This Gold wrought
 into several Angles, was painted with divers
 Colours, resembling so many Gems or preci-
 ous Stones, and to which the Crucifix was
 joyned, yet to be taken off (by the help of
 a Screw) at pleasure. For the Form of the
 Cross, it comes next to that of an Ho-
 mer tree story among the Heraulds, or rather
 the

the *Botany*, yet the pieces here are not of equal length, the direct or perpendicular beam being nigh one fourth part longer than the traverse, as being four Inches to the extremities, whilst the other scarce exceeds Three: yet all of them nearly round at the ends, and the *Botons* Enamelled with Figures thereon. The *Cross* itself is of the same Gold with the *Chain*, but then it exceeds it by its rich Enamell, having on one side the Picture of our Saviour *Jesus Christ* in his Passion wrought thereon, and an eye from above casting a kind of beams upon him: whilst on the reverse of the same *Cross* is Pictured a *Benedictine Monk* in his habit, and on each side of him these Capital Roman Letters: on the right limb thus,

(A) Z A X

A

And on the left thus,

P A C H

This

This **Cross** is hollow; and to be opened by two little Screws towards the top; wherein it is presumed some Relique might have been conserved. The whole being a piece not only of great Antiquity, but of admirable Curiosity. And I look upon this Accident as a great part of my good Fortune, to be made the mean Instrument of their discovery and preservation.

For *Remarques* upon the foregoing relation I shall offer but two to your consideration: First, some Observations concerning the time when these *Holy Things* were first found, and when delivered to this present Majesty: And Secondly, how this discovery agrees with *Antiquity* and those who have writ concerning the *Deposition, Interment, and Translation of this Saints Body*, together with the reasons of his *Canonization*, and rebuilding the *Monastery and Abby-Church of St. Peters Westminster*. For which last Observations, I must here own my self indebted to my very worthy Friend *Mr. Hen. Keepe*, who was pleased to favour me so far.

far as to oblige me with this short abstract from his large *History* of this *Abby's Memoires*.

For the first it is highly remarkable, that it should happen on that day whereon *the late Rebellion* began in *the West*, and much about the *Same Hour* in the afternoon when they landed, that I secured them, being on the *Eleventh day of June, and Thursday in Whitson week*. But much more Observable were the delivery of them to his *Majesty*; it being at a time, and on a day when all people stood in suspense how that great point would be decided, when (as a most happy Omen and Forerunner of the *Good News* which came within few hours after, that his *Majesties Forces* had gain'd an entire victory over his *Enemies*) I humbly presented the same to his most *Sacred Majesty*, being on the *Sixth day of July* following: notwithstanding I had endeavoured to have done it before; but through severall unexpected interruptions, was disappointed of my intent till then: So that *Heaven* seems more to have had the conduct thereof

thereof then bare chance or casualty.

As for this Holy, and Religious **King Edward the Confessor**, he was the Seventh Son of King **Etbeldred**, by **Emma** his Second Wife, Daughter of **Richard the Second, Duke of Normandy**: And during the Invasion and Possession of this Land, by the Cruel and Inhumane **Danes**, he together with his Brethren were conveighed by their Mother into **Normandy**, and there remain'd until their Tyranny and Oppression were over-passed: During which space (all his Elder Brothers being dead, and the **Danes** at length utterly destroy'd or expell'd the Kingdom) He was by the Unanimous and Joynt consent of the Nobility and Gentry of this Realm sent for, and Proclaimed their Lawfull King and Governor, suitable to the many Prophecies and Revelations declared heretofore concerning him. Consing therefore (according to the Exigence of the times) but with a small Retinue into **England**, he was Crown'd at **Westminster**, as some Authors have it (tho' others say it was at **Winchester**) by **Eadhus, Arch-Bishop**

Mat. West.
Flor. Hist.
p. 302.

Hen. Huntingd. Hist.
Lib. 4.

Ingulph. Hist.
p. 361.
Jo. Brompton
Chro. p. 955.

Bishop of Canterbury, and **Alfric Arch-
Bishop of York**, on *Easter-day*, following,
in the Year of our Lord God, *One Thousand
Forty and Three*; Granting unto the said **Abby
of Westminster**, that from thenceforth when-
soever himself, or any of his Successors, *Kings
of England*, should wear their *Royal Diadems*
in that Church, that the *Precentor* of the same,
should receive, at the hands of the *Kings Sher-
riff*, half a Mark of Silver, and the *Covent*
One hundred Simnells, or *Wastel-Cakes* of
the finest Flower, together with *Sixty four
Gallons* of the best Wine, in commemoration
thereof.

Mat. West;
Flor. Hist.
Flor. Wigorn.
Gul. Malmsh.
de Gest. Ang.
Reg. Lib. 2.

The *King* being thus placed on the *Throne*
of his *Ancestors* in *Peace*, and recollecting
what had passed in his former *Exile*, Two
things more especially offered themselves to
his consideration. First, how those *Vows* and
Promises he had then made in case of his *Re-
surrection*, might be performed to his *Satisfa-
ction*; And Secondly, how such wholesome
and binding *Laws* might be *Instituted*, as not
only to secure the *Freedom* and *Tranquillity*
of

of his Subjects during his own time, but to future Ages. The last of these he committed to the care and prudence of his great Council, to see Effected, which were so happily accomplished, that even to this day they bear the name of **St Edwards Laws**; The basis and foundation whereon all our other Laws depend, and which the Princes of this Realm in their Coronation-Oaths oblige themselves to observe: As to his Vows some had respect to the publique, others more immediately related to himself. For what belonged to himself he presently performed upon his first ascending the Throne; But what concerned the Publique, took up further time of deliberation; among the rest he had Solemnly undertook, that as soon as he had settled his Kingdom in peace, to Visit the Holy See, to go to Rome, to perform some set devotions at the stations in that City, and there to repose himself for a time. But this was found a matter of that Consequence (that notwithstanding his whole inclination and fixt resolution to effect it) yet at length he was overperswaded

Ailred Abbas
Rieral: de
vita S. Edw.
& Mirac.
Gu. Lambard
de prisicis
Angl. legibus
edit. per A.
Whelock. p.
136.
Hen. Spelman
Concil. Tom.
I. p. 619.

suaded by the entreaties of the Nobility, and
 Tears of his People to decline it, at least
 'till such time they might send to the then
Bishop of Rome such Persons of Worth and
 Learning that might lay the Case, with all
 the Inconveniences seriously before him, and
 to have his Resolution thereon : which was
 done ; and that with such cogent Reasons,
 and convincing Arguments, that the designed
 Journey was *Dispensed with* : Yet in lieu
 thereof, he was enjoined to bestow what
 Money he had laid up towards the Expence
 of that Voyage on the Poor, Miserable and
 Indigent ; And moreover as a further Re-
 membrance thereof, to Erect some New, or
 Repair some Old Church and Monastery to the
 Honour of St. Peter. All which the King
 most readily embraced, and immediately
 pitch'd upon the Restoring of the *Monaste-
 ry and Church of St. Peters West-
 minster*. In Order thereunto he decimated
 all his Revenues, set Workmen to pull down the
 Old, and to erect a *New Church* (even
 from the Ground) in place thereof ; re-
 D paired

Nicol. Harpo-
 fields Hist.
 Angl. Eccles.
 Pag. 218.

Czf. Baron.
 Annal. Eccle.
 Tom. 11. P.
 290. N. 9.

paired the Offices of the Ruined *Abby*, filled the same with *Monks*, and settled a competent Revenue to sustain them. But see the instability of Humane Affairs ! No sooner was this Work brought to perfection, and the day of *Holy Innocents* in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Sixty and Six, prefixed for the Solemn Dedication of the Church ; But the King fell sick on *Christmas-Day* preceding, and growing worse and worse, on the day following he was scarce able to stay out the Solemnity of High-Mass ; being led from thence to his Chamber, and taking his Bed, the next day his Life was despaired of ; So that he made his Will, Received, and prepared himself for his departure : At the same time bestowing several Gifts and Rewards on certain *Palmer*s or *Pilgrims* that came from far to see him ; And to the *Abbot* of *Westminster* delivered the Ring (returned him by *St John*) to be perpetually preserved among the Reliques of that Church. The day following, tho' very weak, he did his endeavour to be Assistant at the Pompous Dedication

tion of his New Church; but Nature, now almost spent in him, deprived him of that Satisfaction. So that being in his Bed, he had no more strength left then to Sign his *three Charters of Privileges, Donations, and Confirmations*, which he bestowed thereon. And thus languishing 'till two days after the Circumcision, *he fell into a Trance*, became Speechless, Motionless, and lying for dead untill the *Eve of the Epiphany* following: when reviving again with the Chief of the Nobility about him, he began to declare what had been revealed to him concerning the future State of the Kingdom during the time of his Extasie; at the end of which Discourse, gently reposing his Head on his Pillow, he expired (after he had Reigned 23 Years, Six Months and 27 Days) to the Sorrowfull Lamentations of those that beheld him, and exceeding grief of all his Subjects, who soon after found his Predictions verified in the dismal effects of War and Bloud-shed, which ensued.

All things are now preparing for his Fu-

Monastic.
Angl. Tom. 3.
Chart. 1.
Hen. Spelman
Concil. Tom.
1. pro Chart. 2.
In Archivis
West. Chart 3
Mat. Paris p. 2

Hen. Huntingdon Hist.
Lib. 2. p. 307
Mat. Westm.
Flo. Hist. p.
220.

Flo. Wigorn.
p. 633.
Rog. Hov.
Ann. pars
prior. P. 439.

Alfred. Abbas
Rievallis de
vita & Mirac.
S Edw. Con.
P. 492.

neral Rites, the Body washed and Embalmed
with sweet scenting Odors, and Aromatique
Spices; wrapped in White and Precious Lin-
nen, and those covered with Rich and Costly
Vestments; a Coronet on his Head, a Crucifix
on his Breast, and other Regal Ensigns of Ma-
jesty; all which, together with the Corps,
were placed in a Stone Coffin, made after
the Fashion of those Elder Times, hollow
within, according to the Shape of a Man,
and Covered with a loose Lidd of the same
Stone; which the day following his Exit,
(viz. on the Epiphany or Feast of Kings) was
Translated to his New Church, and there, ac-
cording to his Desire before his Departure,
it was deposited with all the Ceremonies and
Grandeur futable to the Quality of the Per-
son and the Occasion.

Wigorn.
Rog. Heved.
256.4. Ann. p. 419.
Mat. Paris
Hist. Angl.
P. 2.

Jo. Brompton
Chren. p. 950.

As this Holy and Religious Prince had,
during his Life time, Cured many most Inve-
terate and Malignant Distempers, especially
those who had any extraordinary Glandules,
or hard Swellings in their Necks or Throats;
so after his Death, People affected with the
like

like Diseases, coming to his Tomb, several received Benefit thereby. The Fame whereof, drew many to pay a kind of Inferiour Devotion to his Memory; Among the rest, that good **Bishop of Worcester** the Pious **Wulstan** was none of the least. And when **William** Surnamed the Conqueror took Possession of this Land, turning out the Old **English** to make way for his New **Normans**, having already made **Lanfranc** his Countryman **Arch-Bishop of Canterbury** in the room of **Stigand**; and still placing some, and displacing others; Having the Formality of a **National Synod** to Countenance and Confirm the same. This **Wulstan** was likewise Cited; where it was objected against him, That he was Illiterate, A Insufficient, and Unworthy to bear so great and weighty a Charge as that of a Bishop; and withall, that he had mis-behaved himself therein; being admonished to resign up his **Pastoral Staff**, and **Bing**; and to leave the same to the Kings disposal. The Good Old Man, concerned at these Proceedings, took
upon

upon him an unusual boldness, and standing up, acknowledged that he was indeed unworthy so great Honour, unsought, and unlookt for by him; yet as for the discharge of his Duty therein, his behaviour had been such that no man with any Honesty or Justice could either tax or blemish; And whereas he had received those Ensigns of his Function from so Knowing and so Glorious a Prince as **King Edward**, he would deliver them to none but him: And so departing the Council, came to his Masters Tomb, where he deposited his Crossier with the profoundest humility imaginable; expressing his Condition with much vehemency and concern; at last concluding, that it would please Almighty God so to make manifest his Innocence, that That Pastoral Staff might be delivered to none but those who were worthy of it. The Arch-Bishop, and Synod being enformed of all that passed, sent immediately for the Crossier: but he that came for it found it immoveable, the Truth whereof being suspected, a Learned and Grave Bishop,

Now legend.
Angl. in vita
S. Wulfstani.
Lan. surius ad
19 Jan. in vita
S. Wulfstani:
aud. per Jacob
Molan-
drum.

Bishop, Gummulfus of Rochester by Name, was Deputed to ascertain the Truth, which likewise he Confirmed: At which, the King, his Nobles, the Popes Legat, the Arch-Bishops, and Bishops, with others there Assembled, admiring, all came to see the Wonder, the Arch-Bishop first attempting to displace it, but in vain; and after many fruitless endeavours of others, **Wulfstan** was entreated by the King to attempt it; who no sooner toucht the *Pastoral Ensign*, but it fell as it were of it self into his hands. Upon which the King with all there present cast themselves at his feet, begg'd his excuse for the Injury they had done him, and that he would give them his Blessing: But the Good old Man, o'recome with such Condescension, fell likewise on his Knees, embraced the King, and the rest of the Company, and heartily forgave them. This was the occasion that **William the Conqueror** ever after bare so great a Veneration for his Kinsman and Predecessor; Insomuch that from thenceforth the *Commanded the Coffin to be Inscribed, and that Shrine*

Nicol. Harp-
field Hist.
Angl. Eccles.
p. 219.

Ailred Abbas
Rieval: de
vita & Mira.
S. Edw. p.
408.

Ibid.

Shrine to be covered with Plates of Gold and Silver, and further Richly Adorned with Pearls and Precious Stones, which was remaining entire and undefaced in the time of Laurentius Abbot of Westminster, about one hundred Years after.

Six and thirty Years after this, when Gilbert Surnamed Cuspin was Abbot of Westminster, certain Discourses and Arguments arose among the Monks, concerning the Corruptibility, or incorruption of this Kings Body. So that to satisfy their Curiosity, the Abbot was resolved upon an inspection: whereunto Gamulfus Bishop of Rochester, formerly mentioned, and now very Antient, with other Persons of great Credit and Gravity were invited: And coming with mighty expectations to the Tomb, the Shrine opened, and the upper Lidd of the Stone-Coffin removed, such a flagrant Odour proceeded from thence, that it scented the whole Church; they beheld the upper Vestments that covered the Body as fresh as if newly put on: the Hands, the Arms, the Joynts of the Fingers and

Ibid.

and Toes, as *plyant*, and Supple, as but lately deprived of Life; *the Flesh retaining* a lively and beautifull *Vigour* as if animated again: But *the Face being covered with an extraordinary Covering* none would venture to uncover the same, untill the grave Bishop of *Rocheſter* undertook it: And beginning below his *Beard*, which was long, and *white* as Snow, he proceeded to diſcloſe the whole Viſage, which was ſo ſhining and of ſo unuſual a brightneſs, that they were all ſtrook with admiration; wherefore with great reverence *they cover'd it again; changing the former Viſtaments, and putting on others of equal price*; Incenſing the Corps, and laying on the cover, they all departed with great Satisfaction, ſeeing they found things ſo ſuitable to their deſires and expectations.

In the Year 1163. *Thomas of Beckett* W. Thorn.
(afterwards *St. Thomas*,) Arch-Biſhop of Chron. Aug.
Canterbury out of a peculiar devotion to this Cant. p. 1255.
pious Princes memory by the Kings Interceſſion, and at his own Expence, procured of
Pope *Alexander the Third* his Canonization, Mat. Paris
which was Solemnized after this manner. The p. 99. translation
uſuall *est corpus B. Thome Cantuariensis*
merito reſe
Heuino qui hac
procuratione

Laur. Series
in vit. S. Ed.
Confeff. cum
Add. Limpo-
mani.

Usuall Ceremonies having passed at *Rome*, and the *Apostolick Letters* returned by those who were sent to procure them; *Laurentius*, who was then *Abbot of Westminster*, received orders to convocate many reverend and venerable persons, as well Bishops, as Abbots; Noblemen, as others, to his Church of *Westminster*, and there publicquely to read the said Letters, or Breves to the assembly; he accordingly performed the same, to the well liking and rejoycing of all those who were present at their publication; But for as much as the *Kings Affairs* detained him at this time in *Normandy*, and his presence thought extremely necessary to the consummation of so grand a Ceremony as the Translation would be, it was deferred till his arrivall in *England* almost two years after; unto whom, the *Arch-Bishop of Canterbury*, the *Abbot of Westminster*, with some others applying themselves to know his Royall Pleasure therein; He at length wholly left the same to the *Abbot of Westminster's* disposal, who being desirous (as *Gilbert* his predecessor had done) to see in what

what condition the Sacred Body lay before he would venture to expose it to the publique, called together the Prior, with a select number of the Monks ; who consulting thereon, came to this resolution: that no one should presume to be present at the sight thereof, but those who had beforehand prepared themselves by Fasting, Weeping and Prayer for such an occasion, and that they only should meet in the Church on the Eve before the Translation, with Tapers in their hands, Albs on their Bodies, and their feet to be all Naked and bare, and from thence to proceed in the Search according to their desires, which was done accordingly ; the doors being first shut, and all others excluded from coming into the Church at that time, they went by way of Procession, to the Steps of the high Altar, Singing of Psalms, and reciting the Litanies, with Prayers made on purpose for that Action. The Abbot, Prior, and two of the Brethren, (leaving the rest at their devotions) approached the Tomb, and removing the upper Stone of the Coffin, they beheld (by the help of their lights) a man, lying in rich Vestments of Cloath of Gold, having on his feet Baskins of

Purple, and Shoes of great price, his Head and Face were covered with a Rich covering, Interwoven and wrought with Gold, with a Beard White and Long, inclining to Curl, and falling decently on his Breast; which sight struck a profound reverence in the Spectators, who called the rest of their Brethren, whom they had left at the Altar, to behold the same: Their curiosity ended not here, but led them further, so that they began (with great Piety and Devotion) some to touch his Head, others his feet, and some his Hands, which they found without any manner of Corruption or Puffaction. And such was the firmness of this Saints Body, that all parts seemed to retain their former brightness and perfection; notwithstanding the outward parts of those Vestments, which lay next the lid of the Coffin, were a little sullied, and had lost some of their freshness, by the contiguity and mouldering of the cement and dust of the Stone which had fallen upon them: all which they gently wiped away with a Linnen Cloth, resolving to remove the whole Body from that Stone-repository to another of Wood, which they had there before prepared

prepared for the same purpose: so that some assisting at the Head, others at the Arms and Legs, they lifted it gently from thence, and laid the Sacred Corps first on Tapestry spread on the floor, and then *wrapping the same in divers silken Cloaths of great value*, they put it into the *Wooden Chest*, with all those things that were found in the former, except the *Gold Ring*, which was on the *Kings Finger*, which the *Abbot* out of devotion retained, and order'd it to be kept in the Treasury of the *Abby*, as a commemoration thereof. The next day, *viz. on the third of the Ides of October*, being Sunday, (and the appointed time for the more solemn translation of this Saints Body) in the Morning Early the *Holy Reliques* were brought into the Quire of the Church, and *publicly exposed* for all those who out of devotion or curiosity should come to see them. The King himself assisted to support the Coffin, at the time of Procession, to whom were joyned *Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury*, *Gilbert Bishop of London*, *Henry Bishop of Winchester*, &c. with many others; The concourse of all sorts of people, as well Nobles

L. Surius ut
Supra.

Joh. Fleet. de
fundat. Abb.
West. Mf. in
Bib. Westm.

Nobles, as Artificers and Soldiers, being so great, that the like had not been seen for many years. After the Procession *the King with his own hands helpt to deposite the holy Reliques in a Shrine which he had caus'd anew to be made for them, all glittering with Gold and Silver.* This day of his Canonization was solemnly kept for some Ages after this, by the Religious of those times, and is not forgot at present by many pious and devout Catholics, who come annually (on the 13th of October) as they do on that of his deposition (the 5th of January) to perform some part of their Devotions here.

Once more *this Sacred Body was removed* from it's Old Habitation and Repose, and that was about the Year of Grace, 1226. When *King Henry the Third* pulled down the Old Church built by this Saint, and Erected a most Stately Edifice in the room thereof : causing a *peculiar Chappel* likewise to be set apart, and Dedicated to him ; adorning it with several Carvings of Masons work, wherein much of his Story, History of his Life & Miracles, are curiously wrought, some part thereof remaining (on the Architrave

on

on the back-side of the High Altar) at this day. In the midst of this Chappell there was likewise prepared a Noble and Magnificent Shrine, the upper part covered with Plates of fine Gold, so Artificially workt by the hands of the most cunning Goldsmiths, and set about with Precious Stones (all at the Kings cost) that it amounted to an inestimable value: but the under-part (with the curious floor round about it) was framed by the command, and at the charge of Richard de Ware the then Abbot of Westminster, with a part of those Stones, and by the same Workmen who compos'd the Pavement before the High Altar; and which he brought out of Italy in his way to England, when he came to the Government of this Abby.

The King likewise commanded a Coffin to be made all of pure Gold wherein to inclose anew the Sacred Reliques. And on the day of their deposition, or placing them in this rich Feretory, there was a Solemn Procession, The King in Person being there with the Chief of the Bishops, Abbots, Priors, and other Religious and Clergy who were then in Town. Moreover, further to grace the Action,

J. Weever;
Fun. Mon. P.
451.

Nicol. Harp-
fields Hist.
Angl. Eccles.
Pag. 457.

Action, on that day, the King made a most Royal
 & Magnificent Feast at his Palace at Westminster,
 where all comers and goers, as well Rich as Poor,
 were liberally treated or rewarded. Which Royal
 Feast and grand Solemnity was performed in
 the Year of our Lord, 1269.

Mat. Paris.
 p. 1005.

From this very time we have nothing on Re-
 cord, that takes notice of any other removall or
 disposall of these *Holy Reliques*: And therefore
 may conclude, they remained safe and undi-
 sturbed untill the days of King Henry the Eighth,
 when we find (in that general Inundation which
 swept away all things Sacred) this Noble Fere-
 tory stript of all its costly furniture, and the Body
 of its Golden-Case, to be meanly inclosed in a
 coarse Wooden Coffin; the same I presume I lately
 saw, and from whence I drew the so often-men-
 tioned **Crucifix and Gold-Chain.**

FINIS.

